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Nov. 21. 76.

A

VINDICATION

OF

Mr. Sherlock

And his

PRINCIPLES

From the Malicious

Calumnies and Cavils

OF

Mr. *DANSON*,

In a late Scurrilous Pamphlet, rudely Entituled,

A

Friendly Debate

Between

SATAN and *SHERLOCK*.

LONDON,

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A VINDICATION OF Mr. Sherlock AND HIS PRINCIPLES.

From the Malicious

Calumnies and Cavils OF Mr. *DANSON.*

NOT long ſince I read over Mr. *Sherlock*'s Book, entituled, *A Defence and Continuation of the Diſcourſe concerning the Knowledg of Jeſus Chriſt*, with ſo much pleaſure and ſatisfaction, that I can do no leſs than heartily thank him for it; and now next to the embracing of his Principles, I know nothing more proper and fit, than their Vindication from the unjuſt Cavils and Conſequences of Mr. *Danſon*, in a rude Diſcourſe he has lately publiſhed.

When I firſt heard of ſuch a Pamphlet, I ſuppoſed it had been an Anſwer to Mr. *Sherlock*'s

Second Diſcourſe (as every man in reaſon would have expected); but after I had ſeen it, I was convinced of my miſtake. I confeſs the Author was wiſe in his choice, for he knew very well there was no phraſe in Mr. *Sherlock*'s Second Diſcourſe he could quarrel with: and, honeſt man, he had no intention to end the Controverſy in a Trial of wit, leſt he had engaged Mr. *Sherlock* himſelf to be his adverſary: and further, he thought he might lawfully enough borrow ſome of his Brethrens ill-framed Principles, to make himſelf the Father of a Book.

The Title of the Pamphlet is ſo rude and odious, that unleſs Mr. *Danſon* had ſubſcribed his name in the cloſe, I had concluded it to be the fancy of ſome diſtracted man, and no more deſerving to be noticed, than *John Taylor*'s *World's-wonder*. Surely, if Mr. *Danſon* had been governed by the leaſt degree of reaſon, he had never made choice of ſuch a *Dialogiſt* to hold Mr. *Sherlock* in diſcourſe; but by this we may learn how dangerous it is to be led by a ſpightful zeal.

The only *medium* our Author makes uſe of to diſcover the unſoundneſs of Mr *Sherlock*'s Principles, is this, that *they afford the Devil the ſame grounds for his hope of Salvation, that they do Mankind.* This (I confeſs) were a very heinous crime if it were true, but if the Charge be falſe, the Calumny is inexcuſable; but I will let that paſs to be examined in its proper place, and now only take notice how Mr. *Danſon* endeavours to blaſt the Reputation of Mr. *Sherlock*: he is not content (good man) that Mr. *Sherlock* ſhould be called a *Pelagian*

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or *Socinian*, alas! theſe are too gentle charges; but to be a *Transformer of Chriſtianity into Mahometaniſm*, that is a Charge odious enough: and now to brand Mr. *Sherlock* with this, is a notable artifice to make every Chriſtian have bad apprehenſions of him. I confeſs it has been Mr *Sherlock*'s unhappineſs to encounter with very diſingenuous and clamorous adverſaries, who wanting arguments to confute his opinions, have ſupplied this defect with malicious Calumnies and Reproaches: many notable inſtances of which, Mr. *Danſon*'s Friendly Debate affords us; for in the very Title-Page, leſt he want ground to call Mr. *Sherlock Mahometan*, he charges the *Mahometan* Religion with a Principle it is no ways acquainted with, which indeed diſcovers the Gentleman's malice, but withal proclaims his ignorance: but I forgot, malice is always blind.

In the Preface our Author is ſo ſagacious, as to foreſee three things an intelligent Reader may fault (as he ſays) in his Debate, for which he is ſo civil as to apologize; the firſt is, that *it comes out ſo late when many perſons of ability have foiled the adverſary, and when he hath mollified the harſhneſs of many expreſſions here repeated in a Second Diſcourſe.* I confeſs, when I read the former part of this Objection, I could not forbear ſmiling, and I thought the Gentleman had a ſtrange forhead, who did mention it with ſo much confidence. I am not to examine what perſons of ability they were who engaged againſt Mr. *Sherlock*: but the World knows how little ground they have to brag of a Victory, who have left the field while their enemy keeps his ground. But let

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us ſuppoſe Mr. *Sherlock* has been foiled, it is truly but a cowardly and unmanly act in Mr. *Danſon*, to throw dirt upon a foiled adverſary. I confeſs it is a pity ſo witty a *medium* came no ſooner in his thoughts, for till now the World hath been at a ſad loſs upon that account.

To the latter part of the Objection he anſwers, That Mr. *Sherlock has not retracted his unſound Tenets, but only mended his Phraſeology*; and now I would very gravely ask Mr. *Danſon*, if every man be obliged to call an opinion falſe, becauſe ſome hot-brain'd fellow may call it ſo. Would not Mr. *Danſon* be offended with me, if I ſhould deſire him to retract his opinions, becauſe I think they are unſound? if ſo, pray why is Mr. *Sherlock* challenged for defending what he thinks is true? If he ſaw that his *Phraſeology* (as Mr. *Danſon* gravely ſpeaks) gave offence to ſome, was it not modeſtly and commendably done in Mr. *Sherlock*, to confeſs, and help it in his Second Diſcourſe? will nothing ſatisfy, if men call not white black?

Secondly, he ſays, *it may be blamed, that Mr.* Sherlock's *Principles are repreſented under the form of a Dialogue, and with ſo odious a choice of a Dialogiſt.* For the firſt, I dare ſay no man will condemn him; and for the latter, I think as few will commend him: but the neceſſity he pretends for both, is childiſh and ridiculous; unleſs it be alledged, that if he had not made choice of ſuch a Dialogiſt, he had miſſed the melodious clinking of two words beginning with the ſame letter, a very familiar elegance amongſt ſuch Authors. *A friendly debate be-*

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tween Satan *and* Sherlock; O but that is a pretty phraſe; but pray why not *Danſon* and *Devil*, truly the conceit holds equally in both.

Thirdly, *Some Readers* (ſays he) *may blame me for repreſenting the Devil as a mean Diſputant*; and to palliate this, he pretends both a *fitneſs* and a *neceſſity* of doing ſo; now although all his Readers ſhould blame him for this, and it may be for ſome greater faults, I cannot help it, let him make *Satan* both a fool and a knave, there is no neceſſity or fitneſs that I ſhould concern my ſelf with it, let them two in a friendly debate decide it between them.

But behold the effect of a rich and fruitful fancy, *perhaps* (ſays he) *ſome Readers may find a fourth fault*, ſtrange ſo many faults in ſo little a Book; but what if ſome Readers find as many faults as there are pages in the Pamphlet, truly I would not wager one to an hundred but they might, eſpecially ſince the Author has ſpent almoſt a ſheet of paper in finding out the faults of four ſheets; now the fourth fault is, *that the Author brings in Mr.* Satan, *playing upon Mr.* Sherlock; and he thinks this is a very witty contrivance, becauſe Mr. *Sherlock hath taken the ſame liberty with his Antagoniſts*, and it is but juſtice that Mr. *Sherlock* has met with; now, Mr. *Satan* muſt be excuſed if he has not handſomely played the Buffoon, for this is probably the firſt time he has tried his wit in this kind of paſtime; but I ſee Mr. *Danſon* is content to undergo the cenſure of a fool, for playing upon Mr. *Sherlock*; and it is but reaſonable I ſhould acquieſce in his determination.

And now I am come to ſurvey the *Dialogue*, and I muſt confeſs it is very pretty to obſerve, how Mr. *Danſon* brings in *Satan* ſometimes in a very ſad and melancholick humour, and at other times in as jovial and cheery a fit as ever you ſaw man in your life; how ſometimes he repreſents *Satan* as a fool, at other times as a knave; and ten to one if ever the Pamphlet admit a Second Part, that is, if ever Mr. *Danſon* take a ſecond fitt of folly, but *Satan* ſhall be repreſented as both fool and knave. But the Reader will wonder at one thing which I will *whiſper in his ear, leſt J. O.* (two terrifying letters, the like are not to be found in all the A B C) *ſhould overhear.* And it is, that *Satan* is brought frequently in defending *J. O.* but pray keep this for a ſecret till your dying-day. But there was another thing I obſerved, which afflicted me heavily, and it is, that *Satan* is ſometimes brought in confeſſing he would believe St. *Paul*, were it not for offending his good friend Mr. *Sherlock*; now this is a very ſad caſe, but yet *Satan*'s faithfulneſs to his friend is commendable. *Satan*, poor ſoul, was the very next ſtep to deſpair, till Mr. *Sherlock* acquainted him he was careleſly dejected; ſince *the light of Nature, and works of Creation, and Providence aſſure us, that God is ſo good that he deſigns and deſires the happineſs of all his creatures*, according to the capacity of their natures: upon this Sir *Satan* preſently concluded, that God deſigns and deſires his happineſs; a deduction ſo natural and genuine, that by no means it could be queſtioned, if Mr. *Sherlock* had not unhappily caſt in the laſt phraſe, *according to*

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the capacity of their natures, for this quite ſpoils the inference; for although God is infinite Love and Goodneſs, yet ſince goodneſs delights only in objects that act regularly, the wilful Apoſtate can never from that *medium* conclude his condition to be hopeful; for in this lapſed ſtate his nature is not capable of love; now I would ask Mr. *Danſon*, what impropriety is there in this phraſe, to ſay the nature of *Angels* in a ſtate of wilful defection, is uncapable of happineſs? and what comfort can either the Devil or the damned draw from this Principle? I declare he ſhall never offend me, who diſcovers a door of hope to either, but I am affraid, *hic labor hoc opus*; and thus *the hearty enemy of Mohometaniſm* may ſee I have not forgotten all my *Latin*; and although (*in verbo Sacerdotis*) I was never ſometime *Fellow of* Magd. *Coll.* Oxon. yet I have pick'd up ſo much Logick in the Schools (that I may borrow ſome of his elegancies) as to frame this Syllogiſm, *Peripatetick*-like, in *mode* and *figure*.---If Mr. *Sherlock* only affirms, that God is ſo good, that he deſigns and deſires the happineſs of all his creatures, according to the capacity of their natures, then he does not afford the Devil the ſame grounds for his hope of Salvation, as he does Mankind: but, *&c. ergo*, *&c.* the *minor* is unqueſtionable; the only thing I have to prove, is, the conſequence of the *major* propoſition, which is yet as evident as any thing can be, becauſe God's goodneſs hath put lapſed man in ſtate of favour, by ſending our Lord Chriſt unto the World to ſatisfy for ſinful man; ſo that all the diſpleaſure that God intended againſt

mankind is removed; but now God never entred upon ſuch a Covenant of Peace with fallen Angels, therefore is mankind in a capacity of receiving the manifeſtations of Divine goodneſs, and fallen Angels are not under ſuch a capacity.

But to proceed, the next heavy Charge he has againſt Mr. *Sherlock*, is, that according to his Principles it will follow, *that if Angels and Men had never ſinned, it had not been poſſible for either of them to underſtand what the goodneſs of God is.* Now this is a very unexpected inference, from Mr. *Sherlock's* words, *viz. That theſe natural notions the Heathen had of God, and all theſe diſcoveries God had made of himſelf in the works of Creation and Providence; and aſſure them, that God is very Good; and it is not poſſible to underſtand what goodneſs is, without pardoning Mercy.* Where it is evident, Mr. *Sherlock* is ſpeaking of the Heathens who were in a ſtate of defection; now how impoſſible were it for fallen man to underſtand what goodneſs is, without pardoning Grace. And it is a ſtrange inference to ſay, that becauſe men in a lapſed ſtate cannot underſtand what goodneſs is without pardoning Grace; therefore it had not been poſſible for Angels and Men, if they had never ſinned, to underſtand what the goodneſs of God is. If Mr. *Dawſon* always reaſon at this rate, men will rather pity his folly, than make their own diſcretion be ſuſpected in anſwering; for all that Mr. *Sherlock* ſays, is in brief this, That as the natural notion of a Deity includes infinite goodneſs, ſo infinite goodneſs includes pardoning grace, when there is a juſt and honorable occaſion for it; now if ſin had not been committed,

mitted, there had been no need of pardon; but ſin having entred the world, and Chriſt made reconciliation by his blood, an honorable occaſion is given to God for exerciſing of his goodneſs in pardoning the ſins of mankind. I confeſs, if Mr. *Sherlock* had ever ſaid, that the goodneſs of God did immediately oblige him to pardon ſinners, that then Mr. *Danſon* might have warrantably whiſpered in Satans ear to take comfort; but he may read himſelf blind, ere ever he find ſuch a ſentence in Mr. *Sherlock*'s Diſcourſe.

But there is another ſtrange concluſion he makes, and it is, *ſince we read in our Bibles, that God will be gracious to whom he will be gracious, it ſeems that notwithſtanding the graciouſneſs of Gods nature, he uſes a Soveraignty in the exerciſe of Grace.* A very good deduction, as if Mr. *Danſon* would ſay, although God be gracious, yet in the acts of Soveraignty he leaves off to be gracious; a horrid Principle. I wiſh the Author had been better acquainted with Mr. *Calvins* Principles; for I remember, I have read in ſome of his Books, That the eternal Rectitude and Goodneſs of Gods will, is ſuch a Law, that he can no more deviate from it, than ceaſe from being. Mr. *Sherlock* does not deabſolute Dominion and Soveraignty, only he ſays, it is bounded by an internal Principle of Goodneſs.

That the holineſs of a Creature, is the reaſon why God determines his Love to any particular perſon, is a reaſonable Poſition maintained by Mr. *Sherlock*; but Mr. *Danſon* remembers, *he has heard read in your Churches Second Leſſons* (truly I thought the Church had been a Bug-bear to Mr. *Danſon*), *That God hath choſen men before the foundation of the*

the world, that they ſhould be holy; which ſeems (he ſays) *to make the holineſs of a Creature the effect, not the cauſe of Gods Love.* Now in return to this, I ſhall only deſire Mr. *Danſon* to conſider, that although it be certain, that God is kind to the evil and unthankful, and makes his Sun to riſe upon the juſt and unjuſt; yet God only delights in the righteous, for the righteous Lord loveth the righteous; ſo that the reſult of the whole is this, if a Creature be not holy, God has no delight in that Creature; for God hates the wicked; his holy Nature cannot be reconciled to Sin, which is to ſay with Mr. *Sherlock, that the holineſs of a Creature is the reaſon why God determines his Love to any particular perſon.* And if this were not true, why do the Precepts of the Goſpel preſs holineſs ſo much? But farther, if it be certain, that the ſinfulneſs of a Creature, is the reaſon why God hates any particular perſon; why ſhould Mr. *Danſon* be angry with Mr. *Sherlock*, for ſaying, that the holineſs of a Creature is the reaſon why God determines his Love to any particular perſon.

Now for the better underſtanding of that phraſe, *that God hath choſen us in Chriſt before the foundation of the world, that we ſhould be holy*; we muſt know, that the clauſe [*choſen in Chriſt*] implies, that the ſubject matter of Election are Believers as ſuch, and not Mankind ſimply conſidered as Creatures, nor yet as faln; and hence our Election being in Chriſt, we muſt be conſidered as holy, for Chriſt is the means of bringing all to a holy life, and the foundation of Election. But I cannot ſtand

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to take notice of every ſilly impertinent objection, therefore I ſhall draw my anſwer into leſs bounds, by giving ſome few inſtances of his Illogical deductions; and firſt, Mr. *Sherlock* ſays, *God is as ready to pardon the worſt of ſinners, when they return to their duty, as a kind Father is to receive an humble and penitent Prodigal.* And now in oppoſition to this, Mr. *Danſon* very ingenuouſly adds, *and why not pardon the worſt of Angels?* It is pity I am not at leiſure to ſhew him the diſparity betwixt the two caſes.

Secondly, Mr. *Sherlock* affirms, that *there is a natural Faith*, i. e. *a belief of the principles of the natural Religion, which is founded upon natural demonſtration, or moral arguments; as that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him.* From hence Mr. *Danſon* infers firſt, That Mr. *Sherlock* introduces *a new Genius of Faith*, and *a ratio formalis of Faith wholly new*; which is indeed to ſay, that Mr. *Danſon* knows not to diſtinguiſh betwixt the notion of natural Faith, and the notion of juſtifying Faith: But I will leave him gratifying his curioſity in pauſing upon this ſubject, and conſider a ſecond inference he makes, and it is, that Mr. *Sherlock by this means* (he ſays) *makes one and the ſame Habit, Science, Opinion, and Faith.* And now he is come to his Philoſophy, I am affraid that ere he has done with Mr. *Sherlock* he will lead him thorow all manner of Sciences. But to ſpeak the truth of his Philoſophick inference, it is very pretty, and has but one fault, it is too profound, for few will underſtand it well but himſelf.

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Thirdly, Mr. *Sherlock* ſays, *that this natural Faith was the Faith of* Abel *and* Enoch *whereby they pleaſed God.* From hence Mr. *Danſon* makes *Satan* infer, That *if I have no promiſe of God's rewarding my Repentance, and forſaking of my Sin, no more had* Abel *and* Enoch, *and yet for all that they pleaſed God.* A deduction ſo illegal, that I am afraid Mr. *Danſon* has pick'd up but little Logick in the Schools; for who told him that *Abel* and *Enoch* had no promiſe of God's rewarding their Repentance; but further, whatever inference he draws from Mr. *Sherlock*'s Principle, militates equally againſt what the Author of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* ſpeaks of the Faith of *Abel* and *Enoch*, *Chap.* 11.

Again, Mr. *Sherlock* ſays, *That the belief of God's Being and Providence are the firſt Principles of all Religion, and God required no more of thoſe good men, who had no other particular revelations of his will*; from hence Mr. *Danſon* makes *Satan* infer, *the Principles of natural Religion being common to me and mankind as rational creatures, a promiſe of rewarding my good actions is included in the very notion of God's goodneſs.* And thus we ſee, though *Abel* and *Enoch* had no promiſe of God's rewarding their goodneſs; yet Mr. *Danſon* has done *Satan* the favour of finding out a promiſe for him: and now who will not admire the acuteneſs of our Author? it is a pity indeed he continued not *Fell. of* Magd. *Coll.* Oxon. for by this time he had been an hopeful Scholar, and one of the greateſt Logicians in *Europe*.

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But yet with the little Logick he has, he catches Mr. *Sherlock* in a Contradiction, and be ſure he will not let him paſs without a challenge: the Contradiction is this, Mr. *Sherlock* ſays in one place, *If Chriſt had never appeared in the World, yet we had reaſon to believe that God is good, and holy, and merciful*; and in another place he ſays, *The foundation of my hope is that which is the foundation of the Chriſtian Religion, the Sacrifice and Interceſſion of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Now I would deſire Mr. *Danſon* to tell me (if he hath not forgotten his Logick, as I am very much affraid he hath) wherein lies the Contradiction; truly, for my part, I ſee not ſo much as the appearance of a Contradiction. But he adds, *Is not this to make Chriſt uſeleſs, and to rednce Religion to its firſt natural ſtate, when you make no other duty neceſſary to happineſs than what the light of nature ſuggeſts, and no other ground needful to the hopes of it, than the goodneſs of God; which had been known as fully as now it is, if Chriſt had never appeared in the World.* Now all this is very well ſaid, and no man, I think, had challenged him, if he had not added, that this is the Sum of Mr. *Sherlock*'s Diſcourſe; for that is a great Calumny, and a perverſe repreſentation of Mr. *Sherlock*'s words; but I ſee it is *Satan* that makes this miſrepreſentation, and we know he was a lyer from the beginning.

But it is a ſad and lamentable buſineſs that we can never be rid of Mr. *Danſon*'s Logick; there is another rule he learned among the Freſh-men that chop Logick in the Univerſities, *viz*, *Fruſtra fit per*

plura quod fieri poteſt per pauciora; which he brings to prove, that Chriſt, Laws, and Religion is uſeleſs, if Nature's Laws and Religion will conduct a man ſafe to the ſame place which Chriſt's directs him to; and conſequently Chriſt is made uſeleſs: juſt as if a man ſhould ſay, the revelation of all the Moral Precepts is uſeleſs, ſince the Law of Nature teaches me them all. This is a ſtrange way of reaſoning; but farther, what ſuppoſe the Laws of Nature conduct a man (who knows no other Laws) ſafe to Heaven; if Revelation direct me more ſafely to that place, is Revelation therefore uſeleſs? If the light of a Star conduct me ſafely to my home, is the light of the Sun therefore uſeleſs?

When God choſe the Poſterity of Abraham *to be his peculiar people, he did not deſign to exclude the reſt of the World from his Care and Providence, and all poſſible means of Salvation, as the Apoſtle argues*, Rom. 3. 29. From hence Mr. *Danſon* very wiſely, according to his uſual method, alledges Mr. *Sherlock*'s meaning is, if he underſtand him aright, (indeed here lies the intrigue) *that the Gentiles before the Preaching of the Goſpel, as well as ſince, had all poſſible means of Salvation.* But ſince a child knows, it is one thing not to be excluded from all poſſible means of Salvation, and another thing to have all poſſible means of Salvation, I ſhall not need to ſpeak more of this.

But amongſt the many wiſe and profound doubts he propounds, he gravely asks, *where were any Jews or Gentiles before the Preaching of the Goſpel*? Now if I ſhould again ask, what he underſtands

ſtands by the Preaching of the Goſpel, I am affraid I ſhould get a perplexed Anſwer: but I will let that paſs, and only ask him, how he came to know that the Goſpel was Preached to *Adam* and *Eve* before they did *operam dare* (as he gravely ſpeaks) *ad liberos procreandos*; but I ſee this is only an apprehenſion of his own, though, I confeſs, of an old date: and now if I were to reaſon like himſelf, that is to ſay, wiſely and confidently) I would ſay, that ſince he always apprehended ſo, he had ſuch an apprehenſion in his Mothers womb.

But theſe are but ſome light skirmiſhes before the battel, now our Author begins to draw forth his whole ſtrength and force againſt Mr. *Sherlock*; and the firſt thing he furiouſly aſſaults, is an innocent expreſſion of Mr. *Sherlock's, that Chriſt was indeed the material object of* Abraham's *Faith, that is, he believed that promiſe which God made of ſending Chriſt into the World; but* Abraham's *Faith was not a Faith in Chriſt; no man could believe in Chriſt till he came, that is, could not believe any thing upon his authority, which is the true notion of believing in him.* Now it will eaſily appear what a fair Adverſary Mr. *Sherlock* has of our Author, by tranſcribing his application, which he makes to be this, *that the promiſe made to* Adam *was of Chriſt, that ſhould be a Saviour four thouſand years after, not that he ſhould be a Saviour to himſelf and his Wife, and their immediate ſeed.* Now every Puny in Divinity knows, that it is one thing to believe in Chriſt, and another thing to ſay Chriſt is the Saviour of all men that are ſaved; to believe in Chriſt

implies a knowledg and belief of thoſe Revelations which Chriſt hath made to the World, and a receiving of them upon his authority: now no man could do this before he came. But to ſay there is no Salvation but by Chriſt, is to ſay with the Apoſtle, *that there is no other Name under Heaven whereby we can be ſaved, but by the Name of Jeſus*; which yet does not imply an explicit belief in Chriſt, or a receiving of truth either revealed or known by the light of nature upon his authority; for if this were true, it is not probable that any of the Gentiles who lived before Chriſt came, were ſaved. Secondly, it is not probable that the Infants of believing Parents are ſaved: and Thirdly, this notion of Faith in Chriſt excludes the moſt part, if not the whole Body of the Jewiſh Nation before Chriſt came for Salvation; which no man that hath a grain of Charity will ſay. I confeſs Chriſt is in a ſpecial manner ſaid to be the Saviour of thoſe that believe, but that he is the Saviour of none but of ſuch, is more than either Scripture or Reaſon concludes. It is not requiſite I ſhould here enquire what degree of Knowledg and Faith in Chriſt the Jewiſh Nation before his Incarnation had; but, methinks, if they had believed in Chriſt before he came, they had alſo asked in his Name; which would appear they did not, from Chriſt's words to his Diſciples, *Joh.* 16. 24. *Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my Name.*

The next thing Mr. *Danſon* blames in Mr. *Sherlock*'s Diſcourſe, is his notion of God's immutable and unchangeable love, *which* (Mr. *Sherlock* ſays) *conſiſts in loving always for the ſame reaſon, and not in*

in loving always the ſame perſon: which notion (if my judgment be any ways regardable) is ſo ſuitable to the inſtances of God's love to particular perſons recorded in Scripture, that I can by no means conjecture how any man can reject it, who is not obſtinately reſolved to oppoſe Scripture. But I ſee we muſt have a little patience (and indeed he muſt have *Job*'s patience who engages with this Antagoniſt) to hear the Application; *Your meaning is* (ſays Mr. *Danſon*) *that God hates Satan for this reaſon, becauſe he is bad; but he would love him if he were good*: And now our Author has once gueſſed very right; and what comfort can *Satan* draw from this? but what farther? *I have* (ſays Mr. *Danſon*) *been hitherto ſo ſimple as to think, that love and hatred when aſcribed to God, did import* (*in the* Calviniſt's *notion*) *an eternal decree or will of God to ſhew or deny mercy to his creatures, and ſo were immutable; but now I underſtand that they ſignify variable affections, which alter with the perſons upon whom they are placed.* Now in return to this it would be conſidered, that Mr. *Sherlock*'s buſineſs is not to diſpute the caſe whether God has elected ſome particular perſons, which yet he does not deny; though he rationally thinks, that election conſiders the qualifications of the perſons: But the debate is, whether this electing-love be the immediate and neceſſary effect of the Divine nature, or the free choice and purpoſe of his will? If it be the free choice and purpoſe of his will, then we muſt be contented to be taught by revelation; for we cannot otherwiſe know it. If it be the immediate and neceſſary effect

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of the Divine nature, then the only notion we can learn from that, is, that God always loves for the ſame reaſon, that is, he loves always thoſe who are good, and hates thoſe who are wicked; and not that he always loves the ſame perſon, whether he be good or wicked. It's true, if the ſame perſon continues always a meet object of his love, he always loves that perſon; but if there be any change of the object, God continues his love no longer upon it: Hence it is that we frequently read in Scripture, of perſons who were once the beloved of God, that when they defiled themſelves with ſin, they were only objects of his hatred: If the righteous forſake his righteouſneſs, and does evil, he becomes an unmeet object of God's love; and it is the immutability of God's love which is the reaſon that he cannot love a wicked perſon: which does not imply any change in God, but only in the object. That God's love to believers preſerves them always meet objects of his love, is truly extrinſecal to the preſent Debate; though Mr. *Sherlock* heartily grants that the perſeverance of Believers is the effect of Divine Grace.

I confeſs Mr. *Danſon* is much in the wrong, to alledg that either Scripture or the *Calviniſts* ſay, *God decrees ſin*; as for Scripture, this is a Doctrine it is wholly unacquainted with; and although ſome *Calviniſts* may be thought to favour this opinion too much, yet I am confident it is generally decried by them as an horrid opinion, which inevitably makes the Holy One the Author of all impiety. As for Mr. *Danſon*'s quibling with the diſtinction of an antece-

antecedent and conſequent will in God, I ſhall not trouble my ſelf with it, becauſe I think the Gentleman knows not well what he ſpeaks.

If Mr. *Danſon* had not a peculiar gift of diſcovering Mr. *Sherlock*'s thoughts, a very mean Diſputer might keep him in play; but it is a hard matter to diſpute with one who draws conſequences, not from an Authors writing, but from his thoughts. Many inſtances of this we might bring, but now I will only ask our Author, how he came to know, that Mr. *Sherlock* thought that God loveth all his Creatures alike; queſtionleſs, unleſs he had examined Mr. *Sherlock*'s thoughts, he had never known this ſecret; to ſay he infers it from his poſition, *that God is the common Creator*, is enough to make men ſuſpect his diſcretion in drawing inferences.

That the Goſpel of Chriſt makes great and glorious diſcoveries of the wiſdom of God, is acknowledged by Mr. *Sherlock*; but he rationally rejects ſuch a notion of juſtice, as diſparages the wiſdom of God in the contrivance of our Redemption by Jeſus Chriſt; which is not to make a Saviour needleſs, as Mr. *Danſon* ſeems to infer; but to ſhew, that if it were abſolutely neceſſary for God to puniſh ſin, and there were no other perſon in the world able to make expiation for it, there was required no great wiſdom to make the choice, becauſe there could be no choice in the caſe.

That Chriſt died for our ſins, is clear from Scripture; but that it was abſolutely neceſſary that he ſhould dye, this is a new Doctrine which revelation never diſcovered. It is certain, that God did not ſpare

his

his Son after he had determined he ſhould dye as a Sacrifice for ſin; but that antecedently to that conſtitution it was abſolutely neceſſary, this we never learn from revelation. It is a ſtrange preſumption for any man to ſay, that there was no other poſſible way for God to ſave ſinners; for then it would follow, that God could not do otherwiſe, and that mankind could not be ſaved in any other way; which is in effect to reduce the whole myſtery of our Redemption by Chriſt to neceſſary cauſes, as Mr. *Sherlock* has very well diſcovered.

But to proceed, I find Mr. *Danſon* very angry with Mr. *Sherlock* for ſaying, *that Chriſt came into the world upon no leſs deſign, than univerſal goodneſs; and that he can have no temptation to partiality, as being equally concerned in the happineſs of all men.* But pray is this any more than what the ſacred Writ gives its ſuffrage for, that Chriſt is the *Propitiation for the ſins of the whole world*, that *he is not willing that any ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould come to the knowledg of the truth*; and that *he is no reſpecter of perſons.* Are not theſe plain inſtances of Gods deſigning the happineſs of all men, and that he is equally concerned in the happineſs of all men? But yet Mr. *Sherlock* grants, that it is very conſiſtent with Gods goodneſs to diſpence his pardons in ſuch prudent methods as his own infinite wiſdom ſhall direct.

And now let us ſee what account Mr. *Danſon* giveth of Mr. *Sherlocks* ſenſe concerning the Doctrine of Juſtification by Faith in Chriſt; and firſt I find him in a great amazement, becauſe Mr. *Sherlock* ſays,

ſays, *Chriſts righteouſneſs, if it be imputed to ſinners, is a very comfortable notion for bad men.* This is truly a ſolid truth, and no jeſt, and any who underſtands what imputed righteouſnes is, in its proper ſignification, will eaſily juſtifie Mr. *Sherlock* from the miſrepreſentations of his adverſaries. And I muſt ſay, if our Author had but conſidered what Mr. *Sherlock* has ſaid in his firſt and ſecond Diſcourſes, he had never troubled the world with his *Friendly Debate*: And now I ſhall only ſay, that if the notion of imputed righteouſneſs, urged by Mr. *Sherlock*'s adverſaries, has no foundation in the Scripture, if it be inconſiſtent with pardon and forgiveneſs, if it overthrows the merit of Chriſts death and ſatisfaction, if it deſtroys the grace and mercy of God in the juſtification of a ſinner, and if it takes away the neceſſity of an inherent righteouſneſs, as Mr. *Sherlock* has abundantly proved, then we ought in reaſon to reject ſuch a notion.

But (ſays Mr. *Danſon*) *had not Abraham a righteouſneſs without works imputed to him, which could not be his own righteouſneſs.* Yes ſurely, *Abraham* had a righteouſneſs without works imputed to him, for *Abrahams* generous and noble act of Faith, who *againſt hope believed in hope*, was accounted or reckoned to him for righteouſneſs; which is not to ſay, that God will reckon that man righteous who does not righteouſneſs; for it is plain, that he that doth not righteouſneſs is not of God; but that this righteouſneſs without works, is a juſtification by Faith, requiring the favour and acceptance of God; and this is the notion of imputed righteouſneſs that

Mr. *Sherlock* embraces; which chiefly consists in forgiveness of sins, and does not require a perfection of works, nor innocence in the person absolved. *See Rom.* 4. 6, 7.

I confess, I know not what Mr. *Danson* means, when he says, *it had been unquestionable, that* Abraham *could not have had whereof to glory, if he had been justified by an external conformity to the Ceremonial and Moral Precepts of the Law*: For questionless that had been a justification by works; now the Apostle tells us, *if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God.*

Having thus got rid of Mr. *Dansons* Cavils against Mr. *Sherlock*'s notion of Justification, I come now to examin what he hath to say against his notion of Christs being Surety of the Covenant. And first I find him in a great amazement: *What!* (says he) *will you* (*Mr.* Sherlock) *acknowledg that the Socinians stand on the vantage ground? did not Christ put himself into the stead of sinners, to suffer what they should have suffered, upon which Gods makes over Christs satisfaction to them.* Now although this charge deserves no particular consideration, it being only a repetition of what Mr. *Sherlock* has already answered; yet to satisfie our Author, I shall tell him, that Mr. *Sherlock* does not deny Christs satisfaction, though he thinks Christ could not bear the guilt (for that was not possible to be done) but only the punishment of sin. Further, Mr. *Sherlock* confesses, that Christ is the Surety of the Covenant, and that Christ may be said properly to dye in our stead; for unless

Christ

Chriſt had dyed, we muſt have died. But then he denies that Chriſt ſo died in our ſtead, as to repreſent and perſonate us; and he rejects that notion of Chriſts being the Surety which reſtricts Chriſts Propitiation to a few ſelected perſons, for whom he was Proxy or Subſtitute; and now I dare truſt any man of common ingenuity to judg, whether ſuch as this hath any ground in Scripture; this is that notion of a Surety that Mr. *Sherlock* cannot be reconciled to, and this he thinks is the very foundation of *Antinomianiſm*; from which they infer our juſtification to be from eternity, which is in effect to make faith and repentance needleſs; and it is a wonder they have not taken away that petition in the Lords Prayer, *Forgive us our ſins.*

But then he excepts againſt Mr. *Sherlock*'s notion of a *Surety of a Covenant, if it ſignifies no more than to confirm and ratifie the Covenant, and to undertake for the performance of it, that all the Promiſes of the Covenant ſhall be made good upon ſuch terms and conditions as are annexed to them. Then it ſeems Chriſt is but Gods Surety to man, that he will be as good as his word; which ſeems to be needleſs, ſince the light of Nature tells us, God is faithful and will keep his Promiſe.* But our Authors reaſoning is founded upon a great miſtake, which he might have eaſily corrected, if he had peruſed Mr. *Sherlock*'s *Defence*; for when Mr. *Sherlock* ſpeaks of Chriſts confirmation of the Covenant, under that phraſe he includes whatever Chriſt did in order to the compleat ratification of the Covenant; which is not a giving teſtimony that God

will be as good as his word, but a giving teſtimony to us, that the Covenant is made ſure, and cannot be repealed, becauſe he hath ſealed it with his blood.

But in fine, our Author inſinuates, that according to Mr. *Sherlock*'s Principles Chriſt is no Surety at all, *becauſe ſinners might have been ſaved, if Chriſt had never dyed for them; and they may be damned, though he hath.* I confeſs, I do not well underſtand the force of this objection; for though Mr. *Sherlock* confeſs, that God might have choſe other ways to ſave ſinners, than by the death of Chriſt; yet he ſays God would choſe no other, and that he preferred this as the beſt, and that now there is no Salvation but by Chriſt, who is the Surety of the Covenant, who hath with his blood made a general Propitiation and Atonement for the ſins of the world. But yet if men neglect to perform the Conditions of the Covenant, they cannot expect to have any benefit by Chriſts death; and now is this to make Chriſt no Surety at all.

But by this time Mr. *Danſon* may have a pretty good gueſs, whether W. S's, or J. O's notion of Chriſts being our Surety, is preferable; and which of them has brought their Hogs to the faireſt Market, as he elegantly ſpeaks.

To proceed, Mr. *Danſon* further obſerves, *that if the Sacrifice of Chriſt's death extends no farther than the example of his life, then Chriſt died only for thoſe in whom was no ſin at all.* I confeſs it were a ſhort, but ſufficient Anſwer to all Mr. *Danſon*'s Arguments, by denying the Conſequence; for I think

I think it will puzzle any man to underſtand it. And now I know not what to make of Mr. *Danſon*'s Inference, unleſs he imagine that God hath no regard to the holineſs of any perſon; it is certain Chriſt's death upon the Croſs was a ſacrifice for ſin, but notwithſtanding, if men continue in their ſins, and perform not the conditions of the Covenant, Chriſt will be no Saviour to ſuch perſons; it is only thoſe who forſake their ſins, and who do righteouſneſs, that ſhall find mercy.

Next, our Author makes *W. S.* and *J. O.* very good friends, and I was well ſatisfied it was ſo. But, unhappy man, the very next turn he was paſt doubt that they would not be good friends in haſt. I was curious to know the ground of ſo laſting a diſcord betwixt two ſuch good friends, and I find it was becauſe *W. S.* thinks *no man will deny that God was very highly pleaſed with the perfect obedience of our Saviour's life.* And now hath not *J. O.* very good reaſon to be Mr. *Sherlock*'s irreconcilable enemy? ſince this is a compliance with *Socinians*, who deny Chriſt's ſatisfaction, but grant that Chriſt did what God was ſatisfied withal.

Let us now ſee what Faith is requiſite to make Chriſt our Saviour, and how Believers are ſaid to be united to Chriſt; and firſt, Mr. *Sherlock* ſays, *our Faith in Chriſt muſt ſignify ſuch a ſtedfaſt belief of all thoſe revelations which Chriſt hath made to the World, as governs our lives and actions.* And from hence Mr. *Danſon* wittily infers, *that Satan is one half of a Believer already*; and truly I ſhall add, when-ever the good time comes that he is the other half,

half, he ſhall be reckoned a very compleat Believer.

Mr. *Sherlock* ſays further, *that God produces not what he loves by an Omnipotent Power, but does good to his creatures in ſuch a way as is ſuitable to their natures.* Mr. *Danſon*, good ſoul, would fain correct this; but if he underſtood it as well as he would make men believe he does, he would not thus proclaim his ignorance. If he pleaſeth he may go to D. *Tuis*, (who is no *Arminian*) and ſee what is his judgment of irreſiſtible Grace; and if he will be pleaſed with the ſenſe of the moſt Orthodox Antiquity, he cannot deny that there is a free principle in man, which is not deſtroyed by the fall, although it is moſtly inclined to vice, till again it be renewed. Now this renovation of the will is not made by giving it more phyſical power, but only by making a moral change: And for effecting this, moral motives with the aſſiſtance of the holy Spirit, are evidently requiſite. It will be no Plea for the wicked at the great day of Judgment, to ſay they wanted power to do well, and that they were phyſically predetermined to do wickedly, and that it was not in their power to reſiſt thoſe omnipotent motions; it is certainly man's unwillingneſs that is the only cauſe of his own deſtruction. Again, if we conſider Converſion, this is not ſolely owing to humane endeavors, the Divine aid and aſſiſtance is neceſſary; but yet men are not like ſtones, altogether ſenſleſs, ſomething they are required to do.

That the righteouſneſs which God requires under the Goſpel, muſt be an inward principle of love and obedi-

obedience; which changes our natures, is a very plain and evident truth. But this is ſo far from making a New-birth needleſs, that it is really all that the Scripture means by a New-birth. As for what Mr. *Danſon* alledges of ſome cavilling Fanaticks, who will tell us, *that our natures are changed before they can put forth a belief ſtedfaſt enough to excite love and obedience.* Truly I cannot help it, if ſome men will take a liberty to ſpeak nonſenſe with confidence. But methinks it is an hard matter to believe, that a man is changed before he be changed, or that a new creature is not a new creature; for to ſay a man is changed before he loves God, or obeys him, is to deny that he is changed; to be born of God, and not to overcome the World, are not very conſiſtent in the Apoſtles judgment: but Mr. *Danſon* is not reſolved to quit *J. O*'s notion for all that. The whole tenor of the Goſpel requires Faith and Repentance, and the ſincere purpoſes of a new life, as conditions on our part antecedently neceſſary to our being united unto Chriſt; and to make the union perfect and compleat, actual obedience is required.

And thus we are come to the Diſpute concerning the uni n of Believers to Chriſt; and I confeſs it is pretty to obſerve Mr. *Danſon*'s policy, in paſſing over thoſe abſurditles Mr. *Sherlock* charges their Opinion with, who maintain the notion of a Surety he rejects. But he has not conſidered well, in ſaying *there is an imparity between Chriſt being a Surety, and Sureties among men*; for this is plainly to acknowledg that we cannot argue from the one to the other

other, yet ſince they agree in the main, (as he ſays) this is but a ſmall miſtake; but alas, what if Mr. *Danſon* has betaken himſelf to Mr. *Sherlock*'s notion of a Surety, may be he would be angry at himſelf if he knew it; but truly, if he examine what Mr. *Sherlock* has ſaid, he will find they are perfectly agreed in this notion.

But the legal union of Believers to Chriſt under the former notion of a Surety being rejected, others betake themſelves to the notion of a Mediator; and Mr. *Danſon*, in diſcourſing of this, ſpeaks very well, only he is guilty of one ſmall fault, which is very like a Contradiction. For, firſt, he confeſſes Mr. *Sherlock* very well obſerves, that the Office of a Mediator is not to perform the Conditions himſelf: but yet the difference (ſays he) between God and Man could not be accommodated by this Mediator, but by performing the Conditions himſelf.

If neither of theſe two notions ſatisfy, they have their recourſe to a third, which they call a *Myſtical union*; which, becauſe it is myſterious, Mr. *Danſon* does us the kindneſs to explain it thus; *I have always* (ſaith he) *underſtood that they mean no more by a Myſtical union, than an union Analogical to natural union, ſuch as that of the Vine and Branch, Head and Members.* Now, if Mr. *Danſon* ſtand to this ſenſe of a Myſtical union, he muſt grant, that Chriſtians, who are members of Chriſt's Body, and receive the influences of Grace from Chriſt, the Head of his Church, receive not theſe influences immediately from Chriſt, but by the mediation of the Word, Sacraments, and Prayer, which are the regular methods

thods of his own appointment, and the ordinary means whereby he communicateth himſelf to Believers; for it is unqueſtionable, that every member of the natural body does not receive its influences and nouriſhment immediately from the Head; and thus it is no difficulty to underſtand how Chriſt is the Fountain of Grace. But Mr. *Danſon* malicioufly repreſents Mr. *Sherlock*, as if he denied that Chriſt is the Fountain of Grace. Now, becauſe Mr. *Sherlock* has expreſly owned the Divine influences of Grace from Chriſt, all that I ſhall ſay, is this, that there is neither candor nor honeſty in Mr. *Danſon*'s Challenge.

From all this it appears, that Mr. *Sherlock* had good reaſon to diſown our immediate union to the perſon of Chriſt, the bad Conſequences of which Doctrine he has plainly ſhewed in both his Diſcourſes; and yet this is not to deny the union of Chriſtians to the perſon of Chriſt, but only a rectifying of their miſtake; who conſider the perſon of Chriſt as abſtracted from his being the Head of his Church; and who dream that we are firſt united to Chriſt by Faith, and then united to the Church by a ſubſequent conſent: and laſtly, who imagine that we are immediately united to the perſon of Chriſt without our performing the Conditions of the Covenant.

And thus, though Chriſt is the Surety and Mediator of the Covenant, yet the union between Chriſt and Chriſtians is not properly a Legal or Myſtical union, but a Spiritual Political union; which conſiſts in the ſubjection of our minds and ſpirits to his go-

vernment, who is our Spiritual King, and this entitles us to his Merits and Righteouſneſs, and to the influences of his Grace. This is Mr. *Sherlock*'s notion of our union to Chriſt, which is plain and eaſy, and very agreeable with thoſe forms of ſpeech, whereby the Scripture repreſents our union to Chriſt. From hence bad men can take no encouragement while they continue in their ſins, nor can Mr. *Danſon* make *Satan* draw any other inference from this notion, than *that now he is half gone*; and this is in truth all that Mr. *Danſon* urgeth it with.

And now he has but one ſcruple more, and that is, to make plain an expreſſion of Mr. *Sherlock*'s, viz. *That God required not ſuch a Sacrifice as the death of Chriſt for the expiation of our ſins, becauſe he could not do otherwiſe.* I confeſs I need ſay no more, but deſire him to peruſe both Mr. *Sherlock*'s Diſcourſes, where he may ſee this, and any other thing he hath objected, very well anſwered: But to ſatisfy our Author, I ſhall add, that if ſin could not be expiated by the Blood of Chriſt, then, 1. There was a neceſſity of ſome Sacrifice for the expiation of ſin, which is more than we can warrantably conclude from Scripture: and, 2. There was a neceſſity that Chriſt ſhould die, if ſin were expiated; and ſo, 3. God *could* not do otherwiſe, and Mankind could not be ſaved any other way, which is to reduce the whole Myſtery of our Redemption by Chriſt, to neceſſary cauſes; and however Mr. *Danſon* hath heard other Doctrines conſtantly taught in the Aſſemblies of Chriſtians; yet that will never prove theſe other Doctrines to be true, unleſs he can prove that theſe Aſſemblies could nor err.

That

That there may be ſome Caſes wherein the Supreme Governour cannot, conſiſtently with his holineſs and wiſdom, and the ends of his Government, do any other than puniſh ſin, is confeſſed by Mr. *Sherlock*: but yet he thinks it an harſh notion of his Adverſaries, to ſay God, is under a neceſſity of nature to puniſh every ſin that is committed; and therefore out of a juſt indignation to ſuch an horrid Doctrine, which in its conſequences makes God irreconcilable and ſavage, he has declared his diſpleaſure againſt it, in words, which he confeſſes might have been more inoffenſively expreſſed: But yet if men muſt be condemned for ſhewing the horrid conſequences of bad Opinions, the Charge will lye at the Apoſtles door, who ſaid, *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we die.*

And though God is a *conſuming fire* to ſinners, who go on in a continued courſe of ſin and rebellion againſt him; yet there is nothing in Gods nature can give repenting ſinners cauſe of fear; and however ſuch may be amazed at firſt with the terrors of God, yet the more ſpiritual that there ſorrow is, the ſooner do thoſe terrors ceaſe and vaniſh.

And now I am near to a concluſion of this Diſcourſe; for the heads of arguments he ſums up, are only a repetition of what we have already conſidered, and I have no mind to imitate our Author in a needleſs repetition; but ere I cloſe, I muſt conſider the huge reverence he pretends for the Church of *England*; and it ſeems he is very well verſed in its Articles and Homilies, for he brags, *he could out*

of them produce paſſages that are diametrically oppoſite to every poſition of Mr. Sherlocks. Whether this charge be true or falſe, we may gueſs pretty well by what Mr. S*herlock* has ſaid in his *Defence*, *Ch.* 3. But to what end he tranſcribes the Seventh and Eighteenth *Artic.* I confeſs I cannot gueſs, for I ſee not any one Poſition of Mr. S*herlocks* that they thwart: For firſt, Mr. S*herlock* never denied, that there is no ſalvation but by Chriſt, which is the only import of *Artic.* 18. Nor Secondly, that everlaſting life is offered to mankind by Chriſt both in the Old and New Teſtament; although he thinks there were not ſo full diſcoveries of Chriſt in the Old Teſtament. And now I think Mr. S*herlock* will not fear the Curſes of the Church of *England*, becauſe he knows her Curſes are not cauſleſs. And to conclude, I always ſuſpected that ſomething was the matter, why he wrote ſo much like a man inſtructed in the Art of Railery; now I find out where he has been taught, and that he has ſome intereſt in *Billingsgate*, that makes him recommend others there for inſtruction.

All that now remains, is to ſurvey his *Poſtſcript to the Reader*; and I promiſe him, I had never quarrelled with him for concluding with Mr. S*herlocks* words, if he had not ſo ridiculouſly mangled them by an alteration of words, which make them unintelligible; and in truth, as they are applied, no man can ſay Mr. *Danſon* ſpeaks truth, for what Scheme of a new Religion has he given his Reader? and what are the fundamental Principles and Practices of it? Sure while he endeavours to expoſe this new Religion to the

the ſcorn of every conſidering man, the fate he threatens it with, is in all probability like to fall upon himſelf.

I confeſs I know not to what end he tranſlates Dr. *Arrowſmith* and *Grotius* words he had quoted in the Title page, unleſs it be to ſhew his Reader he has skill to tranſlate a Latin ſentence, and ſo in a capacity to teach School-boys. I know he would have his Reader believe, *that the only thing wanting to brand the* Sherlockians (queſtionleſs a dangerous Sect) *with the name of* Socinians, *and ſo of more refined* Mahometans, *is an explicit denial of the Godhead of Chriſt.* This is a great charge, and if he make this appear, the *Sherlockians* are very bad men, and maintain very bad principles; but if it be falſe, as I am apt to believe, the Calumny is inexcuſable. But I remember, Mr. *Sherlock* hath fully vindicated himſelf, and ſhewn the falſeneſs of this charge; therefore I ſhall only conſider the pretence Mr. *Danſon* lays down for charging Mr. *Sherlock* with Socinianiſm, the paſſage is this, *no man could believe in Chriſt till he came; that is, could not believe any thing upon his authority.* Now if this prove not the *Sherlockians* to be in a good forwardneſs to deny the Godhead of Chriſt, I never ſaw the like: For here are three fair Inferences; 1. *If no man could believe any thing upon Chriſt's authority till he came, then Chriſt had no authority till he came.* 2. *He was not pre-exiſtent, and ſo not God before he came: And,* 3. *He had no primary and immediate Divine authority when he came, but only ſecondary and mediate, that is, the authority*

of

of a Prophet. O bene factum! O lepidum caput! that I may uſe his Elegancy: but pray, Mr. *Danſon*, what if ſome Rogue ſhould deny that Mr. *Sherlock* is ſpeaking of Chriſt, as God, but as he is Mediator God-Man? and alledg that the cited Paſſage can never admit another Gloſs. If this be true, then your three lucky Inferences vaniſh: for although Chriſt was the Lamb ſlain from the foundation of the World in the Divine determination and appointment, yet he was not really ſlain till he was a real man, and you know that was not till the fulneſs of time came; and however the Jewiſh Nation might (as ſome of them did) believe the promiſes of a future *Meſſiah*, yet they could not believe any thing upon his authority till he came; for to believe upon his authority, is to believe his expreſs declarations, and thoſe revelations he hath made: now theſe could not be believed till they were publiſhed; and this was not till he came.

And now I have ſurveyed Mr. *Danſon*'s Inferences ſcattered in his Preface, Dialogue, and Poſtſcript; and upon the review I am ſenſible ſome men may blame me for taking notice of ſo trifling a Pamphlet, which only charges Mr. *Sherlock* with conſequences his Principles are unacquainted with, and therefore can never wrong Mr. *Sherlock*'s reputation, unleſs among perſons who never read his Books. I confeſs this conſideration had almoſt prevailed with me to forbear any examination; for next to the publiſhing of fooliſh Diſcourſe, there is no greater folly than to anſwer it: But when I again conſidered ſome mens Principles, who conclude every thing unanſwered,

ſwered, to be unanſwerable; and having underſtanding of ſome mens brags, I thought fit to hearken to the wiſe mans counſel, *Anſwer a fool according to his folly, leſt he be wiſe in his own conceit*, Prov. 26. 5.

FINIS.

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